

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/855,091	LINEBERRY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Scott L. Jarrett	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to July 27, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,3-15,24-50,52-55 and 58-79.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Susanna Diaz
SUSANNA DIAZ
Primary Examiner
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DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Daniel Fitzgerald (Reg. No.38,880) on October 4, 2005

Amendments to the Title:

✓ METHODS AND SYSTEMS FOR DEVELOPING AN PERFORMING
ACQUISITION INTEGRATION PROJECT PLAN

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method performed by a computer for developing an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said method comprising the steps of:

automatically displaying on the computer a plurality of integration areas to be selected by a user based on a type of acquisition being performed including at least one of a type of company and a type of asset being acquired, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user and are not entered into the computer by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

automatically displaying on the computer a plurality of pre-defined integration events based upon the user selected integration areas, each pre-defined integration event being displayed in association with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the plurality of pre-defined integration events are menu selections selectable by the user and are not entered into the computer by the user, the plurality of pre-defined integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, each of the plurality of pre-defined integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for the specific type of acquisition being performed;

displaying on the computer a detailed explanation for each pre-defined integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and

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a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration, the detailed explanations are viewable by the user and are not entered into the computer by the user;

developing an acquisition integration project plan for the specific acquisition integration by prompting the user to select from the display at least one pre-defined integration event for the each user selected integration area, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and the any automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process;

displaying a name of a person responsible, a due date, a completion percentage, and a commentary for each user selected, pre-defined integration event and each automatically selected, pre-defined integration event; and

storing the user selected and the automatically selected integration events and the name of a person responsible, the due date, the completion percentage, and the commentary for each integration event into corresponding integration areas, as the acquisition integration project plan.

2. (canceled)

3. (original) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

receiving user defined integration events for the integration project;

displaying user defined integration events for the integration project; and

storing the user defined integration events within the acquisition integration project plan.

4. (original) A method according to Claim 3 wherein said step of storing the user defined integration events comprises the step of storing the user defined integration events as corresponding to at least one user defined integration area.

5. (original) A method according to Claim 4 further comprising the step of forwarding the user defined integration areas and user defined integration events to a system administrator for inclusion into the pre-defined integration areas and pre-defined integration events.

6. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the acquisition integration project plan is stored in ~~at least one of~~ a spreadsheet format and a web page format.

7. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the step of displaying a detailed explanation for each pre-defined integration event further comprises enabling a user to update the advice for performing an integration event and the at least one sample presentation relating to the integration event during an acquisition process.

8. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of displaying, without being entered by the user, a deliverable checklist for each integration event.

9. (currently amended) A computer for developing an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said computer programmed to:

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automatically display a plurality of integration areas to be selected by a user based on a type of acquisition being performed including at least one of a type of company and a type of asset being acquired, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user and are not entered into the computer by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

automatically display a plurality of pre-defined integration events based upon the user selected integration areas, each pre-defined integration event being associated with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the plurality of pre-defined integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types including at least one of a variety of companies and assets being acquired, the plurality of pre-defined integration events are menu selections selectable by the user and are not entered into the computer by the user, each of the plurality of pre-defined integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for the specific type of acquisition being performed;

display a detailed explanation for each pre-defined integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration, the detailed explanations are viewable by the user and are not entered into the computer by the user;

develop an acquisition integration project plan for the specific acquisition integration by prompting the user to select from the display at least one pre-defined integration event for the each user selected integration area, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any the automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due

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diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process;

display a name of a person responsible, a due date, a completion percentage, and a commentary for each user selected, pre-defined integration event and each automatically selected, pre-defined integration event; and

store the user selected and automatically selected integration events and the name of a person responsible, the due date, the completion percentage, and the commentary for each integration event into corresponding integration areas as an acquisition integration project plan.

10. (original) A computer according to Claim 9 further programmed to:

display user defined integration events for the integration project; and

store the user defined integration events within the acquisition integration project plan.

11. (original) A computer according to Claim 10 further programmed to store the user defined integration events as corresponding to at least one user defined integration area.

12. (original) A computer according to Claim 11 further programmed to forward the user defined integration areas and user defined integration events to a system administrator for inclusion into the pre-defined integration areas and pre-defined integration events.

13. (currently amended) A computer according to Claim 9 further programmed to store the acquisition integration project plan in ~~at least one of~~ a spreadsheet format and a web page format.

14. (previously presented) A computer according to Claim 9 further programmed to enable a user to update the advice for performing an integration event and the at least one sample presentation relating to the integration event during an acquisition process.

15. (original) A computer according to Claim 9 further programmed to display a deliverable checklist for each integration event.

16.-23. (canceled)

24. (currently amended) A system for developing an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said system comprising:

a client system comprising a browser;

a database for storing data; and

a server coupled to said client system and said database, said server programmed to:

automatically display on said client system a plurality of integration areas to be selected by a user based on a type of acquisition being performed including at least one of a type of company and a type of asset being acquired, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user and are not entered into the system by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

automatically display on said client system a plurality of integration events based upon the user selected integration areas, each integration event being displayed in association with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the plurality of integration events are menu selections selectable by the user and are not entered into the system by the user, the plurality of pre-defined integration events are associated with a variety of

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acquisition types, each of the plurality of integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for the specific type of acquisition being performed;

display on said client system a detailed explanation for each integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration, the detailed explanations are viewable by the user and are not entered into the computer by the user;

develop an acquisition integration project plan for the specific acquisition integration by prompting the user to select from the display at least one integration event for the each user selected integration area, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any the automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process;

display on said client system a name of a person responsible, a due date, a completion percentage, and a commentary for each user selected integration event and each automatically selected integration event; and

store in the database the user selected and automatically selected integration events and the name of a person responsible, the due date, the completion percentage, and the commentary

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for each integration event into corresponding integration areas, as an acquisition integration project plan.

25. (original) A system according to Claim 24 wherein said database further comprises data corresponding to at least one of a name of a person responsible, a completion percentage, a due date, and a commentary for each integration event.

26. (previously presented) A system according to Claim 24 wherein said database further comprises data corresponding to an overview of acquisition integration, and feedback received from users.

27. (currently amended) A system according to Claim 24 wherein said database further comprises data corresponding to at least one of a deliverables checklist for each integration area and headings for integration events within an integration area ~~of at least one~~ of pre-due diligence, due diligence, post sign/pre-close, post close, and transition to operations.

28. (previously presented) A system according to Claim 24 wherein said server is configured to cause a screen listing a plurality of integration areas to be displayed at the client system.

29. (previously presented) A system according to Claim 28 wherein for an integration area, said server is configured to cause said client system to display a plurality of integration events for the integration area.

30. (original) A system according to Claim 29 wherein the integration events are sorted under headings comprising pre-due diligence, due diligence, post sign/pre-close, post close, and transition to operations.

31. (original) A system according to Claim 24 wherein said server is configured to cause a screen listing a plurality of deliverables checklists for an integration area.

32. (currently amended) A method for developing an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information

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to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said method comprising the steps of:

automatically displaying on an electronic interface a plurality of integration areas to be selected by a user based on a type of acquisition being performed including at least one of a type of company and a type of asset being acquired, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

selecting, from the electronic interface, at least one of the plurality of integration areas;

automatically displaying on an electronic interface a plurality of integration events based on the user selected integration areas, each integration event being displayed in association with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the plurality of integration events are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, each of the plurality of integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for the specific type of acquisition being performed;

identifying, from the electronic interface, a responsible person responsible for each integration area;

identifying, from the electronic interface, at least one of a person responsible and a due date for each integration event within an integration area;

requesting, from the electronic interface, a percentage completion for each integration event;

requesting, from the electronic interface, a detailed explanation for an integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining the

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percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration; and

developing an acquisition integration project plan for the specific acquisition integration by prompting the user to select from the display at least one integration event for the each user selected integration area, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any the automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process.

33. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 32 wherein the integration areas comprise business leader, integration manager, due diligence leader, sales/marketing, sourcing, customer services, collections, manufacturing, engineering, environmental health and safety, services, risk management, six sigma, information technology, communication, human resources strategy, human resources labor relations, human resources employee benefits, human resources compensation, controllership, legal, intellectual property, treasury, Euro program, financial planning, closing reporting, tax integration, and insurance.

34. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 32 further comprising the step of using the electronic interface to update the advice for performing an integration event and the at least one sample presentation relating to the integration event during an acquisition process.

35. (original) A method according to Claim 32 further comprising the step of attaching to an integration event, using the electronic interface, at least one sample presentation.

36. (original) A method according to Claim 32 further comprising the step of requesting, from the electronic interface, a deliverables checklist for an integration area.

37. (original) A method according to Claim 32 further comprising the step of entering, into the electronic interface, comments regarding an acquisition integration.

38. (currently amended) Apparatus for developing an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said apparatus comprising:

means for automatically displaying on a computer a plurality of integration areas to be selected by a user based on a type of acquisition being performed including at least one of a type of company and a type of asset being acquired, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

means for automatically displaying on the computer a plurality of integration events for the user selected integration areas, each integration event being displayed in association with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the plurality of integration events are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, each of the plurality of integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for the specific type of acquisition being performed;

means for displaying on the computer a detailed explanation for each integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and

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a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration; and

means for developing an integration acquisition project plan using the user selected and the automatically selected integration events, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any ~~the~~ automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process.

39. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 38 further comprising means for displaying a plurality of sub-events for an integration event.

40. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 38 further comprising means for displaying a name of a person responsible for each integration area.

41. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 38 further comprising means for displaying an explanation for a selected integration event.

42. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 38 further comprising means for displaying sample presentations from other integration projects.

43. (original) Apparatus according to Claim 42 wherein the sample presentations are files stored within said apparatus.

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44. (currently amended) A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for developing an acquisition integration project plan and for managing acquisition integration to achieve acquisition synergies, customer satisfaction and operational excellence, acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said computer program comprising a code segment that:

automatically displays on the computer a plurality of integration areas to be selected by a user based on a type of acquisition being performed including at least one of a type of company and a type of asset being acquired, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

automatically displays on the computer integration events associated with each user selected integration areas, each integration event associated with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, the integration events are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, each of the plurality of integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for the specific type of acquisition being performed;

displays on the computer a detailed explanation for each integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration; and

develops an acquisition integration plan for the specific acquisition integration including a set of integration events and deliverable checklists by prompting the user to select from the display at least one integration event for the each user selected integration area, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any ~~the~~ automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process.

45. (original) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that allows the user to enter names of persons responsible, percentage completions, due dates, and comments for each integration event.

46. (original) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that manages records pertaining to explanations for each integration event.

47. (original) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that manages records pertaining to sample presentations for at least one integration event.

48. (original) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that manages records pertaining to an overview of acquisition integration.

49. (original) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that manages records pertaining to feedback received from users.

50. (original) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that manages records pertaining to a deliverables checklist for at least one integration area.

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51. (canceled)

52. (original) A computer program according to Claim 44 wherein the data is received from the user via a graphical user interface.

53. (previously presented) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that generates acquisition integration plan based on pre-stored assumptions in a database.

54. (previously presented) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that displays information through a web page downloaded by a server system.

55. (previously presented) A computer program according to Claim 44 further comprising a code segment that:

accesses a database;

searches the database regarding the specific inquiry;

retrieves information from the database; and

causes the retrieved information to be displayed on the computer.

56. (canceled)

57. (canceled)

58. (currently amended) A method for operating a computer to develop an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said method comprising the steps of:

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prompting a user to select an integration area from an acquisition integration main user interface by automatically displaying a plurality of integration areas on the acquisition integration main interface, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

automatically displaying on the computer a set of user selectable and automatically selectable integration events for the user selected integration areas, each integration event being displayed in association with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the integration events are menu selections selectable by the user, the integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, each of the integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for a specific type of acquisition being performed;

displaying on the computer a detailed explanation for each integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration; and

developing an acquisition integration project plan for the acquisition integration by prompting the user to select from the display at least one integration event for the each user selected integration area, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any the automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration

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project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process.

59. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 58 wherein the acquisition integration project plan further incorporates integration sub-events for one of the integration events.

60. (original) A method according to Claim 58 further comprising the step of displaying a name of a person responsible for the selected integration area.

61. (original) A method according to Claim 58 wherein said step of displaying a set of selectable integration events further comprises the step of providing a user interface which includes an explanation for a selected integration event.

62. (original) A method according to Claim 61 wherein the explanation for a selected integration event comprises sample presentations from other acquisition integration projects.

63. (original) A method according to Claim 62 wherein the sample presentations are files stored within the computer.

64. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 58 wherein each selectable integration event is displayed under at least one of a plurality of headings, the headings comprising ~~at least one of~~ pre-due diligence, due diligence, post sign/pre-close, post close, and transition to operations.

65. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 58 wherein said step of prompting a user to select an integration area comprises the step of displaying an integration area list which comprises ~~at least one of~~ business leader, integration manager, due diligence leader, sales/marketing, E-commerce, customer services, collections, manufacturing, engineering, logistics, environmental health and safety, services, risk management, six sigma, information technology, communication, culture, human resources (HR) strategy, HR labor relations, HR employee benefits, HR compensation, HR employment practices, payroll benefits, expatriate

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administration, travel and living expenses, legal, intellectual property, compliance, treasury, Euro program, financial planning, closing reporting, tax integration, controllership and insurance.

66. (currently amended) A computer for developing an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said computer programmed to:

prompt a user to select an integration area from a computer generated screen configured as an acquisition integration main user interface by automatically displaying on the acquisition integration main user interface a plurality of integration areas, the plurality of integration areas are menu selections selectable by a user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

automatically display on the computer a set of selectable integration events for the selected integration area, each integration event being displayed in association with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the integration events are menu selections selectable by the user, the integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, each of the integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for a specific type of acquisition being performed;

display on the computer a detailed explanation for each integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to

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accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition integration; and

develop an acquisition integration project plan by prompting the user to select from the display at least one integration event for the user selected integration areas, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any ~~the~~ automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process.

67. (original) A computer according to Claim 66 further programmed to incorporate integration sub-events for one or more of the integration events within the integration project plan.

68. (original) A computer according to Claim 66 wherein for an integration area, said computer displays a computer generated screen with a name of a person responsible for the selected integration area.

69. (original) A computer according to Claim 66 wherein for a selected integration event, said computer is programmed to display a computer generated screen providing the user with an explanation of the selected integration event.

70. (original) A computer according to Claim 69 wherein the explanation for an integration event comprises sample presentations from other integration projects.

71. (original) A computer according to Claim 70 wherein said sample presentations are files stored within said computer.

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72. (currently amended) A computer according to Claim 66 wherein to display selectable integration events, said computer displays a computer generated screen listing the selectable integration events under headings comprising ~~at least one of~~ pre-due diligence, due diligence, post sign/pre-close, post close, and transition to operations.

73. (currently amended) A computer according to Claim 66 configured with an integration area list which comprises ~~at least one of~~ business leader, integration manager, due diligence leader, sales/marketing, E-commerce, customer services, collections, manufacturing, engineering, logistics, environmental health and safety, services, risk management, six sigma, information technology, communication, culture, human resources (HR) strategy, HR labor relations, HR employee benefits, HR compensation, HR employment practices, payroll benefits, expatriate administration, travel and living expenses, legal, intellectual property, compliance, treasury, Euro program, financial planning, closing reporting, tax integration, controllership and insurance.

74. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium for developing an acquisition integration project plan outlining at least one process for performing an acquisition integration and providing information to perform the acquisition integration, the acquisition integration including assimilating an acquiring entity with an acquisition target including at least one of a newly acquired company and a newly acquired asset including a portfolio, said computer-readable medium executable by a computer for controlling the computer to:

automatically display on the computer a plurality of pre-defined integration areas to be selected by a user based on a type of acquisition being performed including at least one of a type of company and a type of asset being acquired, the plurality of pre-defined integration areas are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of integration areas include commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial;

automatically display on the computer a plurality of pre-defined integration events based upon the user selected integration areas, each pre-defined integration event being displayed in association with a phase in an acquisition process including a pre-due diligence phase, a due

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diligence phase, a post sign/pre-close phase, a post close phase, and a transition to operations phase, the plurality of pre-defined integration events are menu selections selectable by the user, the plurality of pre-defined integration events are associated with a variety of acquisition types, each of the plurality of pre-defined integration events are automatically selectable as a required integration event to be performed as part of the integration for the specific type of acquisition being performed;

display on the computer a detailed explanation for each selected pre-defined integration event including a description of the integration event, advice for performing the integration event, and a sample presentation relating to the integration event, the description facilitates determining a percentage of completion of the integration event, the advice is based on prior acquisition integrations and provides guidance to a person responsible for performing the integration event on how to accomplish the integration event, the sample presentation includes an attached file including data previously presented by the acquiring entity as part of a prior acquisition processes integration; and

develop an acquisition integration plan for the specific acquisition integration by prompting the user to select from the display at least one integration event for each user selected, pre-defined integration area, the acquisition integration project plan includes the user selected integration events and any the automatically selected integration events to be performed as part of the acquisition including the integration events to be performed during the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the due diligence phase of the acquisition process, the post sign/pre-close phase of the acquisition process, the post close phase of the acquisition process, and the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process, the acquisition integration project plan outlines the integration events to be performed in a recommended sequential order from the pre-due diligence phase of the acquisition process through the transition to operations phase of the acquisition process.

75. (original) A computer-readable medium according to Claim 74 wherein the computer is further controlled to:

receive user defined integration areas and user defined integration events; and

incorporate the user defined integration areas and user defined integration events into the generated acquisition integration plan.

76. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium according to Claim 74 wherein the computer is further controlled to display the generated acquisition integration plan in ~~at least one of~~ a spreadsheet format and a web page format.

77. (original) A computer-readable medium according to Claim 74 wherein the computer is further controlled to store user feedback on said medium.

78. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium according to Claim 74 wherein the computer is further controlled to:

group integration events for at least one integration area under headings ~~of at least one of~~ pre-due diligence, due diligence, post sign/pre-close, post close and transition to operations; and
receive a completion percentage for each heading for each integration area.

79. (original) A computer-readable medium according to Claim 78 wherein the computer further controlled to display the completion percentages for all integration areas within an acquisition integration project plan in a spreadsheet format.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

The present invention is directed to methods and systems for automatically developing a specific acquisition integration project plan for the assimilation of a newly acquired company and asset wherein the specific acquisition integration project plan is developed through the automatic and user selection of a plurality of pre-defined and required integration areas (the integration areas comprising commercial, operational, human resources, legal and financial) and events (the events being associated with a phase in the acquisition process, the phases comprising pre-due diligence, due diligence, post sign/pre-close, post close and transition to operations) based on the type of acquisition being performed.

The closest prior art Marpe et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,581,039, Marpe et al. WO 01/39083 A1 and Gundewar et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,381,610 fail to teach, either singularly or in combination the development of a specific acquisition integration project plan through the *automatic selection and user selection* of a plurality of *pre-defined and required* integration areas and events based on the *type of acquisition* being performed as recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 24, 32, 38, 44, 58, 66 and 74.

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Marpe et al. teach a system and method for planning, managing and performing merger and acquisition projects comprising:

- support for the complete Merger and Acquisition Lifecycle comprising three phases: Pre-Deal, Deal and Post Deal and seven stages: Develop Strategy, Analyze Target, Structure Deal, Mobilize Effort, Define Migration, Integrate Operations and Manage Transition (Marpe et al. '039: Column 33, Lines 53-55; Column 37, Lines 1-5; Column 40, Lines 22-24; Column 44, Line 26; Column 46, Lines 65-68; Column 53, Lines 24-68; Column 54, lines 1-68; Column 55, Lines 1-15; Columns 59-68; Figures 2, 20; Marpe et al. '083: Pages 20-21; Figures 19-20, 25-26);
- knowledge management and delivery capabilities to facilitate the learning and execution of merger/acquisition areas and events (e.g. providing information related to integration areas/events of past acquisition projects including: best practices, templates, deliverable checklists, industry solution packs, sample documents and the like; Marpe et al.: '039: Column 9, Lines 23-68; Column 10, Lines 1-37; Column 47, Lines 40-68; Column 52, Lines 23-68; Column 53, Lines 1-24; Marpe et al. '083: Pages 14-16);
- project progress reporting and tracking (executive dashboard, status reports, score cards, etc.; Marpe et al. '039: Figure 7, Element 702; Figure 8, Element 800; Column 17, Lines 60-68; Column 18, Lines 1-68; Column 19, Line 53-54; Marpe et al. '083: Pages 26-28, 49-50);
- decision management support comprising: issue management, change control, readiness assessment and discussion database/bulletin board (Marpe et al. '039: Column 33, Lines 34-68; Figure 13);

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- execution tools for planning and managing the integration specific activities that need to be completed covering five execution functions: communication, quality management, risk management, testing and conversion events (Marpe et al. '039: Figure 8, Element 708; Column 40, Lines 40-45); and

- project planning guide (Column 47, Lines 40-68; Column 48-54; Table 45) and project management tools enabling users create, use, view, modify and search for a plurality of project items (work plans, templates, documents, reports, guiding principles, etc.; Marpe et al. '039: Column 17, Lines 55-58; Marpe et al. '083: Pages 52, 77-78, 89-90; Table 45).

Marpe et al. further teach that the merger and acquisition information (project plans, templates, documents) are non-specific, generic and/or simplistic (Marpe et al. '039: Column 31, Lines 20-25; Column 47, Lines 40-47; Marpe et al. '083: Paragraph 1, Page 49; Paragraph 2, Page 54; Paragraph 4, Page 77) and that the project plans are developed outside of the system by users (Marpe et al. '039: Column 30, Lines 26-37; Column 31, Lines 21-58; Marpe et al. '083: Pages 49-50).

Marpe et al. fails to teach the development of a *specific* acquisition integration project plan through the *automatic selection and user selection of a plurality of pre-defined and required* integration areas and events *based on the type of acquisition being performed* as recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 24, 32, 38, 44, 58, 66 and 74.

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Gundewar et al. teach a method and system for automatically developing a specific (particular) project plan (tasks and procedures) in accordance with a plurality of pre-defined information (standards, guidelines, procedures, templates, tasks, etc.) wherein the system guides the user through the selection of a plurality of project elements including but not limited to: project stages/phases, tasks, activities, processes, procedures and the like (Abstract; Column 1, Lines 48-68; Column 2, Lines 1-24; Column 4, Lines 14-52; Column 6, Lines 1-48; Tables A, B; Figures 1-3).

Gundewar et al. fails to teach the development of a *acquisition integration* project plan *based on the type of acquisition being performed*, the type of acquisition comprising at least one type of company and a type of asset being acquired as recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 24, 32, 38, 44, 58, 66 and 74.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Swenson et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,409,097, teach a method and system for developing and performing process (project, workflow, etc.) plans wherein a plurality of tasks are defined as part of a work process model (project plan).

- Srinivasan, Seshan, U.S. Patent No. 5,548,506, teaches a system and method for developing and managing multiple project plans wherein the system automatically tracks/monitors project progress, allocates/re-allocates resources as well as reconciles task/project priorities/conflicts.

- Hughes et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,893,074, teach a system and method for the development and management of project plans for one-of-a-kind projects/processes.

- Lajoux, Alexandra, The Art of M&A Integration, teaches a plurality of methods (processes, approaches) for performing the integration of one or more businesses/assets (i.e. merging of resources, processes and responsibilities).

- Henderson, Gordon, Success isn't just getting bigger, teaches the seven keys to successful merger/acquisition integration wherein the third key element is the development of detailed project plans. Henderson further teaches that GE Capital Services has a formal model (process) for integration the operations of one or more acquired companies comprising pre-acquisition, foundation building, actual integration and assimilation phases.

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- Stevens, Larry, Trade in your to-do lists, teaches the public use and commercial availability of a plurality of project management methods/systems wherein several of the project planning systems/methods assist (e.g. wizards, help/suggestions, cue cards, warnings, etc.) project managers in developing project plans that reflect the specific/particular nature of their projects.

- Butler, Janet, Automating process trims software development fat, teaches the public use and commercial availability of several process management systems and methods wherein the systems assist project managers in developing specific project/process plans based on templates and other pre-defined information.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-7033. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


SJ

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